21: Asai--4 L-5 (1935-46) 1950 Formosan Aborigines
116, 775, 776 Yami

"The Yami believe in four souls. They say that their souls often go to visit a friend during a dream. The Yami have a distinct idea of gods and they have the idea of several heavens, but this is exceptional among Formosan tribes."

21: Asai--8 L-5 (1935-46) 1950 Formosan Aborigines
116, 626, 776, 784 Yami

"There are many tabus among the Yami. They believe that anyone who goes against the laws will be killed by the gods."

34: Del Re--62 U-4 (no date) No Date Formosan Aborigines
116, 753, 772, 173, 582, 776 Yami

"Unnatural death, failure of crops, death of livestock are considered punishments meted out by them. (31) [MLB: i.e., the inferior gods] Like the gods of the upper

31. AYL, p. 80, n.

plane, they are endowed with the power to will the creation of anything. Their life, food and dress are, in all respects, similar to those of the Yami save that their houses are built entirely of gold, and are found in the seven heavenly villages, corresponding to the seven villages of the island, each of which is under the protection of the god of its respective heavenly village. The gods must always reside in their own village and may not take to wife a goddess from another village. This suggests that, in earlier days, intermarriage between the different communities on the island was taboo. At present, however, such a prescription appears no longer to be enforced. During the annual festivals the islanders call upon and make offerings to these gods of yams, taro, millet and other fruits of the earth to ensure a good harvest and a plentiful catch of flying-fish. There are also anitos on this plane, but they are harmless."

34: Del Re U-4 (no date) No Date Formosan Aborigines
776 Yami

[MLB: For Yami beliefs concerning prevalent types and attributes of spirits and gods see pp. 38-71, cat. 116, this source. For texts of myths concerning spirits and gods see pp. 62-63, cat. 539, this source.]

34: Del Re U-4 (no date) No Date Formosan Aborigines
764, 776, 778 Yami

[MLB: The photograph on page 66 this source is of a perpendicular-shaped rock which the caption states is "The Place of Death" where the bodies of the dead are cast away. The natives visit it fully armed for fear of the Anitos (evil spirits) who are supposed to haunt it.]

39: Wiedfeldt--16 F-3 (1913) 1917 Formosan Aborigines
116, 755, 776, 787, 791 Atayal

Superstitions, fear of spirits, or similar things...are unknown to them. The old woman of the clan, the hamangoppu, tattooes, administers medicines in case of illness, and foretells whether the patient will recover, or whether the woman will have a child. She does this by dropping pieces of elder pith on a bamboo board which she holds on her knees and counting the number of pieces that fall. A raven that lights on a hut is considered an evil omen. This belief does not exist among the Chinese or Japanese. Their imagination has produced no other superstitions or spells.

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different localities, that their cultures, though similar, are not uniform. The native tribes also differ considerably in the degree to which they have been acculturated and in the type of culture change that has taken place.

The Ami

The Ami live in the Taitung Rift Valley, which runs in approximately a north-south direction for 150 kilometres along the east coast of Formosa. Some Ami live on the east coast proper. The Ami tribe is the largest on Formosa. They are divided into five groups by dialect and cultural differences. The number of households and population of each group, based on the census of 1937, are as follows:

Group	No. of households	Population
Pei-nan	859	9546
Heng-ch'un	461	4403
Hai-an	1159	11760
Hsiu-ku-luan	2008	15861
Nan-shih	1713	8436
Total	6200	50006

The chief traits of the Ami are intensive agriculture and fishing; pile dwellings; paddle-and-anvil pottery; long wooden shields; feather headdresses; clans[1]; matrilineal descent and matrilocal residence; classificatory or Malayan kinship terminology; parent-child nymic linkage; and age-grades.

Tavarong is a town of 5,000 population situated in the central part of the Taitung Rift Valley, in Hualien Hsien. It belongs to the Hsiu-ku-luan group and is regarded by the Ami themselves as the oldest settlement in the whole Ami area. About one per cent of the Tavarong townsmen are Christians; the rest hold to their native religion.

Gods, spirits, and souls

The Ami term for gods, which include also spirits and souls, is *kawas*. The Tavarong Ami believe in two kinds of *kawas*. The first kind, which may be considered natural gods, include *maratau*, *tšidar*, *borar*], and others. *maratau* is a male tutolary deity who resides in heaven. According to informant Maran-Namo?, *maratau* is the god of "politics and strength". In former days, when the Ami were at war with their neighbors, the Atayal, they prayed to *maratau* for protection[2]. *tšidar* is the female sun goddess, and *borar*] the male moon god. The sun goddess is held to be more powerful than the moon god. Maran-Namo? while explaining the designs on the houseposts of the house of the *kakita:n* (priest), stated that *tšidar* is the almighty deity and holds the supreme position over

1. Utsurikawa [1935] reported about 55 clan names for the Ami, but he gave no clan names north of the Vataan, Tavarong, and Karuran areas.
2. According to Furuno [1954:3-42], *maratau* is connected with headhunting and is the god of crops and game, as well as being the war god.

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the other gods; both he and other informants failed to indicate any practice of sun-worship[3]. The second type of *kawas* are ancestral gods, called *tatakusan*. The Tavarong Ami worship their ancestors, especially the first ancestors *lotše* and *rarakan*; these latter live among the Ami, although they are invisible. *šikawasai* (shamans) have their special gods[4]. It is clear, therefore, that the Ami have a well-developed theogony, a trait not found among the other aboriginal tribes of Formosa[5].

One who dies an unnatural death will become a *karia* or evil spirit. A person can contract an illness on encountering a *karia*.

Each individual possesses a soul, called *dogɛ*.[6] If one's *dogɛ* weakens, one will become sick; and if one's *dog* should escape from the body, one will die. In this connection, Furuno (1942: 19–23) reported that among the Ami, each human being has two souls, one on the left and one on the right shoulder. The one on the right shoulder is the good soul, and the one on the left the bad. The *karia*, or evil spirits, are the souls on the left shoulders of those who died an unnatural death.[7]

Shamanism

Religious activities are carried out by *šikawasai*, or shamans, and *kakita:n*, or priests. The functions of both are well-defined. A *šikawasai* is consulted mainly to strengthen or call back the *dogɛ* of a sick person. In this sense, the *šikawasai* may be defined as medicine-men. The *kakita:n* manage the Ami religious ceremonies, most of which are agricultural in nature. A *šikawasai* is believed to have been chosen by a dead *šikawasai* or by the *šikawasai* gods. When a young boy or girl contracts a chronic illness, he (or she) is regarded as having been chosen, and it is believed that that individual be cured by becoming a *šikawasai*. This child will then be taught the techniques by an older *šikawasai*. In the first year of his apprenticeship, until the next *irisiy* (the Ami New Year), a taboo on the eating of fish and vegetables must be observed. He is also required to pursue hard labor and to abstain from washing the body. A primary qualification for a *šikawasai* is the ability to achieve a state of delirium.

There are today approximately ten *šikawasai* in Tavarong, seven men and three women. Oikawa's contention that there are more female than male *šikawasai*

3. Furuno [1945:20] recorded the following belief from the Hsiu-ku-luan Ami: "*tšidar*" the sun, gave life to human beings, animals, and plants. We think that she is a *kawas*, too. Rituals cannot be carried on without *tšidar*. The *kakita:n* call on *tšidar* in the *irisiy*. At harvest time, we gave thanks to this goddess."
4. Sayama [1914] listed the names of two *šikawasai* gods, *saoripa* and *sararatol*.
5. Mabuchi [1934-35] discusses this theogony.
6. Furuno [1940:19-21] and Mabuchi [1934-35] recorded the *dogɛ* as a goddess.
7. This belief is found among other Formosan tribes. For a Bunun example, see Mabuchi [1951:55].

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On the sixth day, all grade members gathered once more in front of the *kaʼita;n* house. At this time all the *šikawasai* (shamans) of the town came to the house and performed rites to ward off disease from the attending celebrants. Then, the *šikawasai* danced together, while the others went out to their own fields to perform a ceremony of mimical cultivation to guarantee a good harvest in the year to come.

The final day of the *irisiŋ*, all the inhabitants of Tavarong went to fish in the streams and rivers. Each individual offered one fish to the gods to inform them that the New Year had commenced. After the celebrants returned to the town, the fish were offered to the *tatakusan*, the ancestral gods; the offering was then divided up among the populace and eaten, thus breaking the taboo on fish and vegetables. This concluded the *irisiŋ*.

Conclusions

In our examination of Ami religion, we found that at least in part Ami society can be considered as a theocracy. The *kakita;n*, the hereditary priests, combined in their persons both temporal and spiritual power. The priestly house served as the ceremonial and political center of the tribesmen and may bear some theoretical importance as a possible prototype of the village-temple.

Shamans and priests are clearly distinguished among the Ami. The former succeeded by reincarnation, and the latter through inheritance. Ami shamanism [this was still true in 1953] in typically Asiatic, in that its practitioners are emotionally unstable individuals who derive their power from direct contact with the spiritual world; this contact is made at times of the greatest physical strain [chronic illness]. Ami shamanism is also of a non-Arctic type, since the neophyte is indoctrinated with the shamanistic techniques, instead of receiving them through spiritual experiences of a personal, charismatic nature. The shamans practice a complex and typically Indonesian type of divination.

As with many other peoples of the Indonesian culture area, no sharp distinction is made by the Ami between gods, spirits, and souls, which are all designated by the generic term *kawas*. However, the Ami are atypical among the Formosan tribes in that they possess a relatively highly developed genealogical mythology or theogony. The possible relation between this theogony and Ami social structure is worthy of future study. It may be of significance, for instance, that in this matrilineal society the sun is a female goddess, and the moon male. This spiritual world provides the power and justification for all Ami religious activities, being beseeched with prayers and bribed with offerings.

The *irisiŋ*, the great New Year ceremony which was described in detail, is functionally a world renewal ritual, the renewal of the powers of the stream and soil and, in fact, a renewal of the whole society. In this, the population was

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796
776
769
793
561

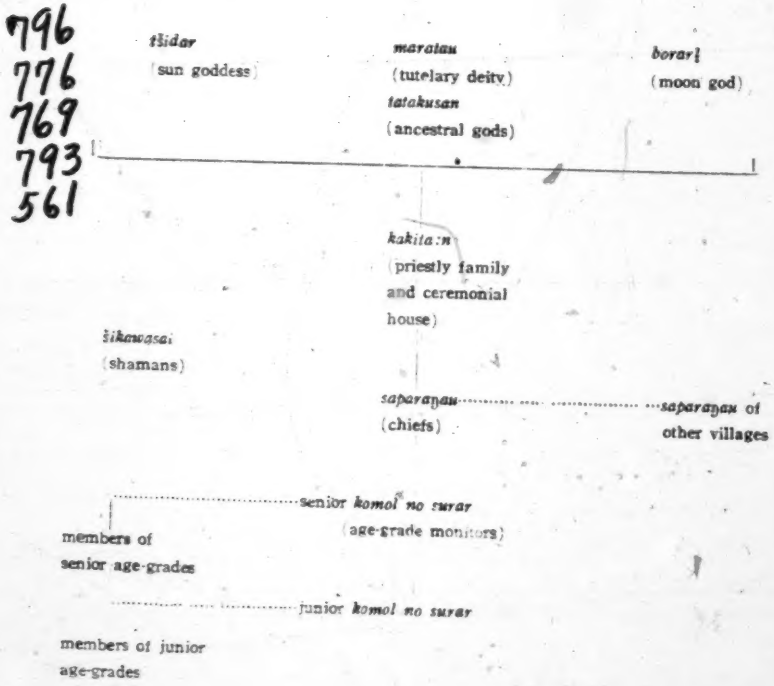

Figure 2: the Ami hierarchy at *irisiŋ*

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purified through fasting, symbolical washing of hands, and shamanistic expulsion of disease. The structure of the Ami universe is at this time stated as a hierarchy in which each rank of seniority hands down precepts to be obeyed by the next lower rank [see Figure 2]. At the top level, for among the Ami the spiritual world is continuous with the material, are the sun goddess, the moon god, and *maratau*, the tutelary deity who instructed men in the order of things on earth. With them are the *tatakusan*, the ancestral gods who are to be respected as elders and whose way of life is to be followed. Under these were the *kakita:n*, the priestly families who carried out the will of the gods in this world. The rest of the Ami were arranged by seniority into a system of age-grades, each with its chosen monitor, and each harkening to the instructions passed down from the next senior age-grade. Acting as intermediaries between the priests and the laity were the *saparaŋau*. leaders of proven ability selected from the ranks of the elder grades. This structure was annually affirmed symbolically in the *irisiŋ*, and it clear that it was basically gerontocratic in nature, in that the real power was in the hands of old men.

All this is of course now passing away, and element after element of the old Ami way of life is either disappearing or being reinterpreted to meet new conditions. In the realm of social organization, for instance, there is a definite drift in Tavarong and other Ami areas towards patrilineal descent and neolocality, a change fostered by Japanese and Chinese pressure. Ami religion is fast changing, and the *kakita:n* house itself is an unused, half-forgotten relic of interest primarily only to ethnographers. Shamanism for some as yet unexplaind reason has persisted; this is a field for further study.

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